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A LETTER FROM UTERCHT,

TO THE ASSEMBLY of DIVINES AT *WESTMINSTER:*

SHEWING

The conversion of Church-Lands to Lay-uses, to be condemned by *Luther, Calvin, Knox,* and the whole Assemblies of Scotch Divines, as a detestable Sacrilege before God, and provoking his heavy judgements.

Sent in a Letter to Doctor BURGES *in* Iune *last, to be presented.*

A Copy whereof comming accidentally to the hands of *W. B.* was by him commended to the Presse.

MAT. 10. 26.

There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: nor hid, that shall not be knowne.

Printed in the yeare, 1648.

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A LETTER FROM VTERCHT

TO THE ASSEMBLY of *DIVINES* AT *WESTMINSTER*.

12-6 43

THe filiall duty we owe our natural parents, excuſes, nay commands all our endeavours for their preſervation; and 'twere ſin to think my ſelf (though but a Lay-man) leſſe indebted to our Spirituall Mother the Church. Therefore I ſhall not need to apologize for this my addreſſe to you in the behalfe of her to whom your ſelves are more obliged: For beſides our equall adoption as Chriſtians, your ſelves are tyed in your particular as Eccleſiaſtiques, naturalized in her womb, nurſt with the milke from her owne breaſt, fed with the ſhew-bread from her Altar. Next, as perſons appointed by the two Houſes of this preſent Parliament to conſult her wel-fare, guard her indempnity: But chiefly as Shepherds and Watchmen appointed by God over his flock, and good Shepherds do not onely keep the ſheep, but their fold ſafe and intire, as their beſt outward preſervative. For if the wolfe enters while ye ſleep, are ye innocent? if while ye look on, are ye excuſable?

But if ye open the doore to him, let your conſciences rather then my pen tell ye your guilt. See therefore that while ye aboliſh Epiſcopacie, ye doe not open wide the doore to ravenous Sacriledge, that ſhall at once devoure the patrimony of Chriſt and his Church; for can ye expect Labourers in the Vineyard, when ye ſuffer not the Lord to have wherewith to pay the peny? Remember that the Roman Soldiers (though Heathens) deveſt Chriſt, onely while they ſcourge him, and then reſtore his depoſited garments, and he weares them till crucified; nor then doth any ſhare them, but ſuch as were active in his death, and of them the meaneſt ſoldier. None *ſeize the Vineyard*, but thoſe that murdred the heire, *wicked husbandmen*; and will ye look on, nay I feare with *Saul*, keep their clothes while they divide the garment, ſhare the Vineyard, ſell the Church-lands before Epiſcopacy be aboliſhed? for God be thanked it is not yet, and I hope the King will ſee it never ſhall be enacted.

S. Mat. 27. S. Iohn 19.

S. Mat. 27. 35. i. Iohn 19. 23.

§. Mat. 21. 35.

Are not ye *Sons of Zadock*, *Prieſts that ſhould teach the people the difference betweene holy and profane things?* and are ye ſilent in this matter? Shall I re-act *Phormio*, and tell ye this is Sacriledge, and ye ought prevent it? But perhaps ſome of you may doubt, therefore though I will not urge ye with the opinion of Fathers, leſt ſome ſtyle them Papiſt; nor the reſult of Councels, leſt ſome terme them Popiſh, yet let me remember and preſſe ye with the opinion of the Angels of thoſe (ye hold the beſt) Reformed Proteſtant Churches; and according to whoſe patterne ye have covenanted to reforme ours, as the Geneva, German, and Scotch Churches.

Ezek. 44. 15, 23

Calv. de neceſſ. Eccleſ. reform. fo. 66, 67. Edit. 1619.

'Tis ſaid to be Sacriledge (ſaith *Calvin*) *to convert Eccleſiaſticall Revenues to other uſes, & I agreeing it. If I ſhould ſay we have not ſinned in this kind, I ſhould lye, they accuſe our Princes to have taken and miſ-imployed to profane uſes the patrimony of Chriſt and his Church, I excuſe it not. That the Churches Re-*

venues